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SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE
File No. B. REGISTRY.

S. 2, Special Branch. *D. 632*

REPORT

Date *December 15, 1934*

Subject (in full) Comment on pro-Soviet book entitled "Our Time"
alleged to have been published in Shanghai.

Made by *A.S.I. Prokofiev* Forwarded by *J. J. J.*

With reference to the endorsement of S. 2. (Special Branch) on the attached report dated December 10, 1934, on the subject of seizure by the Manchukuo authorities in Harbin of N.V. Ustrialoff's pro-Soviet book in Russian entitled "Our Time", which is alleged to have been published by the "Centurion Printing Co.", 126 Nanjing Road, enquiries show that this book has not been on sale in Shanghai and is not available at local Russian libraries. A copy of the book was borrowed for perusal by the undersigned from a person, to whom it had been presented by the author.

It appears that the book in question was published in Shanghai in 1934, but it contains no mention of the place, where it was printed. It consists of 202 pages and is divided into two parts entitled "From the New Economic Policy towards the Soviet Socialism" and "The Ways of Synthesis" respectively. Each part contains a series of articles, some of which were previously published in Harbin and Tientsin newspapers, while the other appear in print for the first time.

Articles contained in the first part are devoted to fundamental political problems of the Soviet Union and are intended to reflect the significance and dramatic character of the past few years. Assertion that the Soviet Socialism has definitely won its battle fought under most difficult and complicated conditions-is the key-note of these articles, of which the one entitled "After the XVII-th Congress", presents the main interest.

The second part of the book contains articles, which are described by the author as "essays on the philosophy of the present epoch". Professor Ustrialoff is not and never was a

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communist. Together with the bulk of the Russian intelligentsia he refused to co-operate with the Bolsheviks during the first period of their rule in Russia and at the time of the civil war he was with the "Whites". His opponents, however, maintain that his position during that period was neutral and that he merely was awaiting the outcome of the struggle with a view to eventually taking the side of the "top-dog", irrespective of its political colour. Indeed, immediately following the final defeat of the "Whites" in 1920 he became a prominent advocate of loyalty towards the Soviet government inspite of his inner scepticism regarding the success of the bolshevist programme. He was not altogether free of this scepticism in 1930, when he wrote: "Should the revolutionary programme-maximum and the planned reorganization of the country prove a success, how can we help exclaiming with joy "Thou hast conquered, o Galillean!" At present, in the light of events of the past four years, he has cast off his last doubts and welcomes the Soviet victory and the ambition of bolshevics to organize a "Classless Society".

Whether he is sincere in his praises, is another question. There are indications that the bolshevist leaders including Stalin are rather doubtful about this point, although the general attitude of the Soviet authorities towards Ustrialoff has been that of benevolence and he was given a post in the Education Department of the Chinese Eastern Railway in Harbin. It is also significant that, with the exception of one visit to the USSR in 1926, he has been residing in Harbin ever since 1920.

His critics from the opposite camp describe him as being a cynic devoid of any principles. To these accusations Ustrialoff replies: "Yes, in your eyes I must look cynical. I

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appreciate our poets and philosophers and at the same time I refuse to see in Lenin an "escaped convict". I do not think that the Russian revolution means death, or shame or is a misunderstanding. I studied moral philosophy at the university of Moscow - and I do not curse the godless Bolshevism! It is beyond your ability to understand me and your insults are for me only another proof of the deep, dreadful and beautiful complexity of life."

Ustrialoff's reputation as a clever publicist is well established. The book under review is undoubtedly of a strongly pro-Soviet character, and is likely to create impression desired by the author upon the minds of readers, especially among Russian emigrants' youth. It must be pointed^{out}, however, that the author treats his subject in an abstract, academic manner.

In the opinion of the undersigned the book in question contains nothing which would warrant an action on the part of the Municipal Police against the person or persons responsible for its publishing.

A. Prokofiev

D. S. I.

File

D. C. (Special Branch).

DEC 15 1934



Professor N.V. Ustrialoff.

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SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE
File No. 8-1-1-1-1

S. 2, Special Branch *Subst.*

REPORT

Date December 10, 1934.

Subject (in full) Pro-Soviet book entitled "Our Time" seized by the Manchoukuo Authorities at Harbin.

Made by D. S. Umemoto. Forwarded by *SB Len*

Information has been received by the local Japanese Consular Police from the Harbin Consular Police to the effect that several copies of a Russian book of pro-Soviet nature entitled "Our Time" have been seized at Harbin. Upon being question by the Manchoukuo Authorities, H.B. Ustrialoff, the author of this book, who is a professor at the Politic-Technical Institution in Harbin, made the following statement:- "In June this year, I requested N. S. Zephiroff, a resident in Shanghai, to print some 300 copies of the book. I understand that they were printed at the Centurion Printing Company in Shanghai by order of Zephiroff. A friend of mine who came from Shanghai brought to me 40 copies several of which I have already delivered to Moscow, the Soviet Embassy at Tokyo and other places. I do not remember the name of the person who brought the book to me. I do not know what Zephiroff is doing in Shanghai."

N. S. Zephiroff is connected with "The New World", a daily Russian-English newspaper of pro-Soviet tendencies published in Shanghai. Centurion Printing Company has its office at No. 126 Nanking Road.

M. Umemoto.

D. S.

D. C., Special Branch.

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Please see

Please put up file re Centurion Printing Co. J.H.

S.S.I. Kolaofier to comment on S.S. Umemoto's reports. Is there any action that we can take? J.H. 1/2.

Files attached. Date 10/10/34

S.S.I. Pink

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